



November 2021

## St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

65 Walnut Street

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1N9

Tel: 204-775-6477

Email: [stpetersoffice@mymts.net](mailto:stpetersoffice@mymts.net)

Website: [www.stpeterslutheran.ca](http://www.stpeterslutheran.ca).

Pastor: Rev. Bjoern Meinhardt ~ 204-792-3346

### Midnight Oil

*At Midnight there was a cry, "Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." (Matthew 25:6)*

On October 29, the church commemorates Saint Narcissus who was bishop of Jerusalem in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. He was born around the year 100 and died at the age of 116(!) in the year 216.

When he was 80 – the same age when God called Moses to free the Israelites out of Egypt – he became bishop of this holy city. Many held Narcissus in high esteem and called him “the holy priest.” His ministry was described as one with vitality and vigour.

One legend about Narcissus remembers him for a miracle when he turned water into oil. The faithful of his church were distressed because there was no oil in the lamps to be used during the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday. Narcissus asked them to draw water from a neighbouring well and after he had blessed it he told them to put it in the lamps. It changed into oil. It is said that some of the oil was still preserved long afterwards.

This oil incident makes me think of another oil story. In Matthew 25 we hear Jesus' end-times parable about the five prudent and five foolish virgins who awaited the arrival of the bridegroom at an unspecified time. It is another story that wants to teach us that we should carefully prepare for the time when Christ comes again – which could happen *any time* for we do not know the day or the hour.

The text in Matthew 25 tells us that *all* ten virgins fell asleep. There is nothing wrong with falling asleep – we all fall asleep, it is all too natural that we need to rest. That wasn't any different for those virgins. What caused the problem, however, was the fact that the foolish virgins used up all the oil in their lamps. It didn't help them to ask the five prudent virgins if they could borrow some from them when the bridegroom finally arrived at midnight. They were not ushered into the festive hall. They were left out.

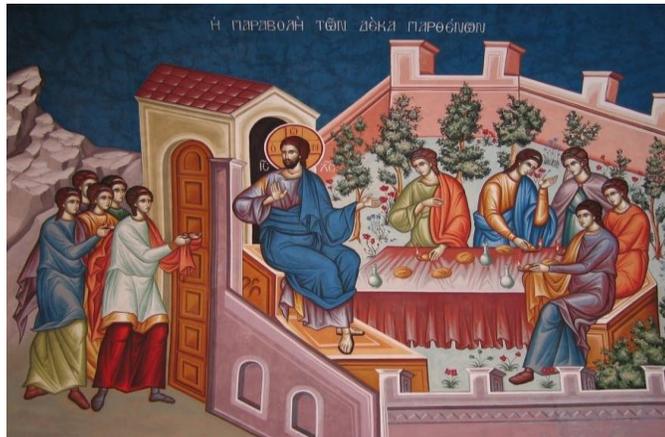
For the Swedish Lutheran theologian and bishop Bo Giertz (1905-1998) the oil that is “so indispensably necessary is faith. Where this faith exists,” he wrote, “is where you're ready to meet [the Lord] when he comes. ... This parable contains both a warning and comfort.” We are to see to it that we keep the faith. “Then you are ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night, or on a day when none of us expect it.”

Saint Narcissus could turn water into oil so that there was enough oil in the lamp for the Vigil of Easter, even enough oil for decades to come. From the five prudent virgins we can learn to have enough oil in our lamps to keep our faith burning: through the hearing of God's Word, through prayer, through Communion both at the Table and with one another, so that we are prepared to greet, in faith, our bridegroom-Lord when he comes again.

Yours in Christ,  
Bjoern E. Meinhardt, Pastor



Saint Narcissos of Jerusalem  
 (Saint-Barthélémy church in Bénévent-l'Abbaye.  
 Photo: G. Freihalter. Wikimedia (Commons))



Parable of the Ten Virgins. Greek Fresco

## Mitternachts-Öl

*Um Mitternacht aber erhob sich lautes Rufen: Siehe, der Bräutigam kommt! Geht hinaus, ihm entgegen!*  
 (Matthew 25,6)

Am 29. Oktober ist der Festtag des Heiligen Narkissos, der im 2. Jahrhundert Bischof von Jerusalem war. Er wurde um das Jahr 100 geboren und starb im Alter von 116(!) Jahren im Jahr 216.

Als er 80 Jahre alt war – im selben Alter wie Mose, als Gott ihn berief, die Israeliten aus Ägypten zu führen –, wurde er zum Bischof dieser heiligen Stadt ernannt. Viele hielten Narkissos in Ehren und nannten ihn „den heiligen Priester“. Es wird gesagt, dass er seinen Dienst mit Lebensfreude und Kraft versah.

Eine Legende von Narkissos besagt, dass er einmal Wasser in Öl verwandelte. Die Gläubigen seiner Gemeinde waren aufgebracht, denn es war kein Öl in den Lampen, die für die Osternachtfeier gebraucht wurden. Narkissos bat seine Gemeinde, Wasser aus einem nahegelegenen Brunnen zu holen. Als er das Wasser gesegnet hatte, ordnete er an, dass es in die Lampen gegossen werde. Dort wurde es zu Öl. Und man erzählte sich, dass einiges von diesem Öl noch lange Zeit danach aufbewahrt wurde.

Diese Öl-Erzählung lässt mich an eine andere Öl-Geschichte denken. In Matthäus 25 hören wir Jesu Endzeit-Gleichnis von den fünf weisen und den fünf törichten Jungfrauen, die auf den Bräutigam warteten, dessen Ankunftszeit nicht bekannt war. Es ist eine weitere Erzählung, die uns unterweisen möchte, dass wir uns sorgfältig auf die Zeit vorbereiten, wenn Christus wiederkommt. Das kann *jederzeit* passieren, denn wir wissen weder den Tag noch die Stunde.

Der Text in Matthäus 25 weist darauf hin, dass *alle* zehn Jungfrauen einschliefen. Es war also nichts falsch daran, einzuschlafen – wir alle brauchen unseren Schlaf und müssen uns ausruhen. Das traf auch auf die Jungfrauen zu. Das Problem lag aber darin, dass die fünf törichten Jungfrauen die gesamten Ölvorräte in ihren Lampen aufgebraucht hatten. Es half ihnen dann auch nichts, die fünf weisen Jungfrauen zu fragen, ob sie ihnen etwas Öl abgeben könnten, als der Bräutigam endlich um Mitternacht ankam. Sie wurden nicht in den Festsaal hineingeführt. Sie mussten draußen bleiben.

Der schwedische lutherische Theologe und Bischof Bo Giertz (1905-1998) erkannte, dass das Öl, „das so unabdingbar nötig ist, der Glaube ist. Wo ein solcher Glaube besteht“, schrieb er, „ist man bereit, den Herrn anzutreffen, wenn er kommt. ... Das Gleichnis enthält beides: eine Warnung und Zuspruch.“ Denn wir sollen

zusehen, dass wir diesen Glauben aufrechterhalten. „Dann seid ihr bereit, selbst wenn er mitten in der Nacht ankommt, oder an einem Tag, wenn es niemand von uns erwartet.“

Der Heilige Narkissos konnte Wasser in Öl verwandeln, sodass genug Öl vorhanden war für die Lampen, die während der Osternachtfeier brannten. Es blieb sogar noch Öl für viele Jahrzehnte danach übrig. Von den fünf klugen Jungfrauen können wir lernen, dass auch wir genug Öl in unseren Lampen behalten, um damit das Feuer unseres Glaubens am Brennen zu erhalten: durch das Hören von Gottes Wort, durch Gebet, durch Gemeinschaft mit Gott am Tisch des Herrn und untereinander, auf dass auch wir im Glauben darauf vorbereitet sind, unsern Bräutigam-Heiland zu empfangen, wenn er (wieder)kommt.

In Christo, euer  
Björn E. Meinhardt, Pfarrer

**Financial Update:** Thanksgiving in our church has always been a significant time in our congregation. Even though we do not have farmers in our congregation, thanking God for the harvest in our lives and the blessings we have received makes us realize that we live in a special place on earth. We are still free to practise our Christian faith, have food in abundance, a comfortable place to live and all our children can pursue their dreams. We believe this "being thankful" has manifested itself in the two Sunday

Thanksgiving services' generous offerings. In addition, our treasurer reported a surplus for September, which makes us confident of meeting all our expenses by year-end. But, and there seems always to be a but, as we had reported last month, we are facing some more extensive repair and maintenance costs in our fifty-two-year-old building. So, as we look at one of our wall hangings on the sanctuary wall, let us always have "GRACE FOR THE JOURNEY". *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

### Special November and Early December Birthdays

|                 |             |    |                    |             |    |
|-----------------|-------------|----|--------------------|-------------|----|
| Steve Herbst    | November 14 | 81 | Wilfried Kleinholz | November 16 | 91 |
| Meta Pohl       | November 24 | 86 | Erich Hartfiel     | November 28 | 89 |
| Adele Behlke    | November 29 | 93 |                    |             |    |
| Anita Hindemith | December 2  | 86 | Marion Korn        | December 3  | 83 |

**May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you!**

### Wedding Anniversaries

Helga & Gerhard Roehr December 14 58 years      Meta & Arthur Pohl December 18 57 years

**Congratulations! We wish you continued blessings. Thank you for being such a good example to all of us!**

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

**It is that time of year again to remind all CHURCH COMMITTEES** to have your yearly reports for 2021 in by Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Only exception: Pastor's Report is due on Monday January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and the Audit Committee's Report is due January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022.



At the Thanksgiving Service, Mark Kinzel provided an update on the school's developments and included a greeting from Memory and Henry Midzetseni in which they thanked St. Peter's for our partnership and the significant impact the St. Peter's Hall will make. Following that Sunday, Jerry Roehr sent the following message to Memory and Henry: *I want to extend our many thanks for your messages and for the video created especially for St. Peter's. We are and have been excited to be part of the school's development from the very beginning. Your words about the importance of the St. Peter's Hall were something our members did not realize. So thank you again, and I hope that one day I will be able to visit after two postponed scheduled trips.*

Memory replied: *We are privileged to have you and your (St. Peter's) family. Thank you so much.*

The video of Mark's presentation is available from Jerry Roehr, e-mail [roehr@mymts.net](mailto:roehr@mymts.net).



Four hundred fifty students from public schools in neighbouring villages lined up at 6:00 am to apply for 60 openings in January 2022. The issue is that public schools graduate less than 10% of the girls. Their parents cannot afford private schools, so Kuwala provides a unique option.

The first four-year class will graduate next August. Five years ago, there was an open field. Now there is a guarded, fenced school complex, running water, a sewer system, electricity, teachers residences (1½), two greenhouses, dormitories (1 ¾), a soccer field, and the St. Peter's Hall will have a kitchen with canning equipment. In addition, the hall will be used by other schools for national exams. Our students all have one-to-one computers (not heard of in Malawi), and every Friday, students meet children from the neighbourhood and are teachers themselves.

In the future, the Kuwala newsletter will be sent, via e-mail, to all our members. Furthermore, our members and friends are reminded to visit the [kuwala.org](http://kuwala.org) website for all the existing developments. In addition, if you go the google earth and click on "Kuwala Christian Girls School," you will see not only the location of the school but also some pictures and short video clips. *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

### Friendly reminder:

Saturday, November 6 to Sunday morning, November 7<sup>th</sup>, remember to turn your clocks **BACK ONE HOUR!**  
Hmmm...does anyone still have Clock??



**A reminder on options for making donations.** (1) For those of you using the PAR system, we would request that you continue with it, as PAR provides excellent documentation for our office and records.

(2) For those of you wishing to use e-transfer for donations, please follow these instructions and let us know if you encounter any difficulties:

- e-transfers can be sent from your bank to [giving@stpeterslutheran.ca](mailto:giving@stpeterslutheran.ca) . Your donation will be automatically deposited without a password being required.
- An e-mail notification is then sent to the church office, letting us know that your donation has been sent.
- Please note that your bank might charge you a fee to do this, but that fee would be equivalent/similar to cheque cashing charges and/or postage if you are mailing in your donation.
- the e-transfer option provides you with a “notes” or “message” section. We would ask that you use this to indicate:
  - a) where you would like your donation to go: weekly budget, mission, building, memorial, etc.
  - b) please indicate your envelope number, to make the work of our envelope secretary, Steve Herbst, so much easier.
  - c) With the help of David Budnick, who manages our church website, we will also add a link, on our website, to this donation option.
  - d) Here is a sample of a real-e-transfer donation. We have redacted or changed the names to ensure the anonymity of the donor, but everything else looks like what you would encounter.

[View in browser](#)

| [Français](#)

**Hi ST PETER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH,**

MR [Peter Walnut] has sent you \$100.00 (CAD) and the money has been automatically deposited into your bank account at RBC Royal Bank.

**Message:**

Hi Steve.

Please allocate \$50 to Weekly Budget and \$50 to Building Fund. My envelope number is 104.

Thank you.

[Peter]

**Reference Number:** CA7u5y9S

Please do not reply to this email.

**Any submissions to the December 2021 edition of the St. Peter's Newsletter should be made 10 days prior to the first Sunday in December. So, submissions for the December Newsletter should be made by noon Thursday November 25, 2021. Submissions should be sent to Ortrud Oellermann at [stpetersnews@gmail.com](mailto:stpetersnews@gmail.com)**

**John Longhurst.** Over two years ago, our congregation started contributing annually to support the Free Press' religious content - not only the Saturday Faith Page. On October 18, 2021, we participated in the Free Press advisory group meeting. We know that religious association is one of the main factors determining whether someone gives to charity or volunteers—something which is illustrated time and again by reports from Statistics Canada. Across Canada, it is estimated that places of worship in 19 major cities produced an economic benefit of \$19.9 billion, including \$1.5 billion in Winnipeg.

We know how faith groups serve the poor, the needy, the hungry and the homeless here and worldwide. We may know all these things, but most Canadians don't. They don't attend our services, read our newsletters, visit our websites or follow us on social media. If they hear anything about Religion at all, it will likely be via stories in the media. And if those stories are primarily about scandal, tragedy, and conflict, that's all they will know about faith in Canada. At this advisory meeting, John reported that 179 articles had been published since January, an average of about 19 per month. Paul Samyn (Free Press editor) said the value of the project could be seen in two ways. First, the coverage serves all readers, not just the faith community. Second, the Free Press's coverage allows one to go deeper than other media outlets into stories about faith. This puts the Free Press where it needs to be. He added the project has a rub-off effect on the whole newsroom, making other reporters and editors aware of faith-related stories and prompting them to look for them. In addition, having a specific budget line for faith focuses attention on that topic.

There are currently 25 faith groups providing \$40,000.00 for the faith project, and in addition, crowdfunding raised \$10,436.99, surpassing the goal of \$10,000.

*Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

## **Announcements of events that may be of interest to members of St. Peters**

### **A Day of German Unity. A Look at Angela Merkel's Legacy**

On October 1, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy in Toronto offered an homage to 16 years of Angela Merkel, the daughter of a Lutheran pastor, who served 16 years as Germany's chancellor. (Until a new chancellor has been selected after the federal election in September, Mrs. Merkel will remain in office.)

This Zoom-event was co-hosted by the German Embassy in Ottawa. A six-person panel (participants included: Peter Boehm, former ambassador of Canada in Germany, and Christoph Heusgen, former ambassador of Germany to the United Nations) offered a wide array of anecdotal stories in their mosaic review of Chancellor Merkel's leadership.

If you are interested in the panel discussion, you can access and watch it here:

<https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/upcoming-events/webcasts/event-highlights-on-the-day-of-german-unity-a-look-at-angela-merkels-legacy/>

### **Christkindlmarkt 2021**

This year the German-Canadian Congress (GCC) will offer Canada's longest running Christkindlmarkt (since 1985) as an in-person event again at Fort Garry Place Mall (85 Garry Street) from Friday, November 26, through Sunday, November 28.

Here are the operating times:

On Friday, November 26, from 12noon through 8PM.

On Saturday, November 27, from 10AM through 7PM.

On Sunday, November 28, from 10AM through 4PM.

